

Serial No.: 10/036,982
Attorney Docket No.: F-423

Patent

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. In the March 10, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner required election under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to one of the following groups of allegedly distinct species:

- I. Claims 1-11; and
- II. Claims 12-15.

The Examiner stated that no claim appeared generic.

In response, Applicants hereby elect with traverse to prosecute Group I.

Applicants respectfully submit that there would not be a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction were not required. Although the Examiner has identified two allegedly distinct species, a search of the prior art regarding claims to Group I and elected species may reveal whether prior art exists with regard to the claims that read on the other species. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submits that the Examiner should examine the entire application on the merits. See MPEP § 803.

CONCLUSION OF REMARKS

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the restriction requirement.

Applicants respectfully request early and favorable action by the Examiner. If the Examiner believes that any issues may be resolved by a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicants at (203) 924-3180.

AUTHORIZATION

No fee, other than the fee for any enclosed petition for extension of time, is believed due with this response. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to

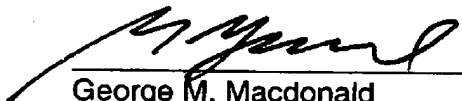
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charge any additional fees which may be required for the response or credit any overpayment to the Pitney Bowes, Inc. Deposit Account Number 16-1885, Order No. F-423.

In the event that an extension of time or additional extension of time is required to make this response timely filed, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to the Pitney Bowes, Inc. Deposit Account Number 16-1885, Order No. F-423.

Respectfully submitted,



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